OUR FAITH

TWENTY LESSONS

BY

EDWARD A. HORTON

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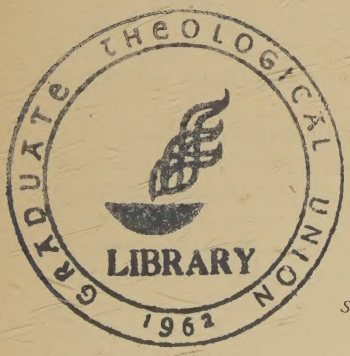

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PREFACE.

Teaching doctrines in our Sunday Schools has always been viewed with distrust. Creeds have never been imposed on our children. But a strong feeling has risen in behalf of such a simple and central instruction as may bestow upon the young an intelligent idea of universal religion and genuine Christianity. "Our Faith," as represented in the following lessons, is supposed to meet this desire. Indeed, one may call it a deep need; for religion without convictions must be very vague and uncertain, resting on the emotions. The "five points" taught and enforced in the following chapters are so inclusive, so capable of indefinite expansion, so complete in their application to all life, that there does not seem to be any possibility of mental bondage or spiritual slavery.

On the other hand, these lessons will be found helpful in laying the foundations of character, conferring a reasonable religious belief, interpreting the Bible, and planting ever-growing truths in the scholar's mind. The author of this statement of belief was convinced that it would be widely accepted in the twentieth century by the progressive members of all sects. This is coming somewhat true already, for it has been adopted in many of the so-called Trinitarian churches. Nothing similar has found such a wide use in our own churches and Sunday Schools.

The teachers using this in Sunday Schools, or parents teaching it at home, are advised to secure some of the books referred to in the lessons These pamphlets or volumes will be very helpful, and they will also lead to still further supplies of information through the references contained in their own pages. The author of this manual believes that any Sunday School making a thorough course of these lessons will strengthen the cause of liberal religion in a most substantial manner. Religious convictions are the great need of the hour. Central truths such as these cannot be too deeply impressed or too much illustrated.

EDWARD A. HORTON.

147

CONTENTS.

Lesson	I.	Introduction.
	II.	The Three Gates.
	III.	Therefore.
	IV.–VII.	Fatherhood of God.
	VII.–X.	Brotherhood of Man.
	X.–XIII.	Leadership of Jesus.
	XIII–XVI.	Salvation by Character.
	XVI.–XIX.	Progress of Mankind.
	XIX.	How to use the Faith.
	XX.	Summary and Review.

LESSON ONE.

Our Faith.

THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.
THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.
THE LEADERSHIP OF JESUS.
SALVATION BY CHARACTER.
THE PROGRESS OF MANKIND, ONWARD AND UPWARD FOREVER.

I. THE TALK.

We are to talk together about Our Faith. It is printed above. Perhaps you would like to know where it came from and why it is just in the shape you see it?

It grew.

It is a great many years old, how many I cannot tell. Yes, it took hundreds of years to become what it is. You see a certain number of letters in print, not many, and you might think any one could make this; but not so.

Many Men made it.

Wise men and good men thought and thought, wrote and wrote, telling what they felt to be the truth about God and all things. We know what they did by the books that have come to us, many of them very old writings. All the time there was some more light, some progress, because the truth was shining in on man more from God. So there were many "faiths," and there are now; for men do not see and think alike.

One Man.

At last one man, good and wise, wrote out what you find at the beginning of this lesson. His name was James Freeman Clarke, a preacher, much beloved and honored. He had studied the Bible, and knew all that had been said before. Instead of making a long one, he made a short "faith." He said: "This is what people will believe in the Twentieth Century. This is what we ought to learn, remember, and love."

Five Points.

We will call them the five points of our faith. Dr. Clarke thought that such simple, clear points could be understood by every one. He did not claim them as original; but, as I have said, he told us they grew. They came as fruit on the great branches of the past.

The Truth.

We do not want to study these five points, if they are not true. But we believe them to be the truth. There are many other things that are true, which are not mentioned in this statement. No one can put everything into one short list. These are what we call "central." They will always be true; and from them we may go, and to them return as long as we live.

The Wisdom of It.

Now is not this wise? Having this faith, you are like a man with a compass. The compass does not give you a map, but it tells you the points, and helps the traveller on the land and the sailor on the sea. We are trying to reach in life character, happiness, and usefulness. Our faith points the way, though we are so different in our lives. It makes everything safe and sure for all.

Other Faiths.

Some persons believe in different statements from this one. They are sometimes called "creeds." I have nothing to say about those. This is ours; and we want to know some of the reasons why we believe it, and why we are trying to lead others to accept it. In the lessons to follow, each of the five points will be taken up, and we will try to make clear what they mean, what they ask us to believe, and what they command us to do.

The Three Gates.

There are three gates through which we must go to learn about our faith. I may call them The Gate Wonderful, The Gate Beautiful, and The Gate Dutiful. Or we can call the three The Thought Gate, The Heart Gate, and The Will Gate. You and I, and all persons, have these three gates by which great truths come.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

First of all, have the pupils memorize the faith. Let it be repeated in unison at each session of the class. Explain what is meant by the growth of Christian belief. Mention the councils and theologians who have contributed to this progress. Show how the teaching of Jesus has been slowly understood. Refer to the life of James Freeman Clarke, and describe how such a man, with open mind, gathered in truth from all quarters. Do not fail to make clear the value, the superior value, over all other "creeds" of one that embodies the central truths of religion. They need not be unlearned as we grow older, but they can be enriched. The Three Gates will be treated more fully in the next lesson.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. How old is this faith? 2. Did many men help to make it? 3. Did it grow? 4. What man put it into this form? 5. Can you mention anything about him? 6. What other name has our faith? 7. Is it like a compass? 8. Do we believe our faith to be true? 9. What kind of truth is it? 10. Was it wise to make it so short? 11. What are the names of the Three Gates?

References.

Those who use this course of lessons are urged to read on large lines. The subjects treated are very wide and inclusive, touching theology at all points. The works of Channing, Parker, Hedge, and Clarke, will be found helpful. For more particular aids, of a manual kind, I suggest James Freeman Clarke's "Manual of Unitarian Belief," Minot J. Savage's "Unitarian Catechism," and Charles F. Dole's "A Catechism of Liberal Faith." Among the free tracts of the Unitarian Association are many well adapted to meet the present needs. I also advise the use of A. W. Gould's "Beginnings." All the volumes mentioned above will be available through the entire series of lessons. Among the books specially adapted for particular lessons are Minot J. Savage's "Belief in God," John Fiske's "Through Nature to God," and his "Destiny of Man," George A. Gordon's "The Witness to Immortality," J. H. Crooker's "Jesus Brought Back," Professor F. G. Peabody's "Jesus Christ and the Social Question," Smiles's "Character," Kramer's "Right Road."

LESSON TWO.

I. THE TALK.

In our last talk I told you there were three gates by which we learned our faith. And I promised to tell you more about them. We shall use them in the coming lessons. Every one can think, can feel, can act. Of course, we learn other truths by the same gates; but I want to show how it is with the five points of our faith in the talks we are to have.

Thought Gate.

I suppose animals think some, but how much no one can tell. How much do you think they think? We say they have "instinct." But what is instinct? I call it a kind of reason, an exercise of mind. We have more thinking power, and can study ourselves. I doubt if a dog or cat or horse studies himself.

Wonder.

Now one of the first things that happened to man long ago was the habit of wondering. The first part of the Thought Gate is wonder, and that is why I called it also the Gate Wonderful. If we did not wonder, we should not be curious; and, if we were not curious, we should not learn anything.

Curiosity.

So the first ones who lived on the earth wondered at what they saw. The sun, stars, winds, hills, skies, excited curiosity. And ever since men have been thinking, searching, learning. They have passed in and out of the Thought Gate. What have they found out? Why, ever so much about the earth, its age, its climate, its contents; ever so much about the stars, navigation, and health; but, still greater, something about God, who made all these things, about the soul, about heaven.

Truth-seeker.

Those who were leaders in all this were called truth-seekers, and also God-seekers. Because when you go in by the Thought Gate, searching for truth, you are really searching for God. This is one of the ways "Our Faith" came to be found,— by the thinking power of man.

Heart Gate.

Now there is a second way, and I called it before, the Gate Beautiful, or the Heart Gate. It is beautiful because you have such lovely things with it,— music, pictures, poetry, and friendship. Our feelings are very strong. You know it. They sometimes carry us away. We like certain things, and we do not like other things. When we get excited and are stirred, then we are filled with feeling.

Good and Bad.

Of course, good and bad go through the Heart Gate, and that is true of the Thought Gate, too; but now we have in mind the good and beautiful. We can guard the Heart Gate: we can invite what we prefer to pass through it. We can make noble sentiments enter in and rejoice us.

Worship.

After a while the first men built places of worship, built

altars, and worshipped God. They not only wondered and learned, but they found in their hearts a desire to pray and to sing psalms, and to speak of Him who made all things. This they did,— not as we do, but in their wild, ignorant ways. There was too much fear and superstition at the Gate Beautiful then, in those old days, so long ago.

God's Goodness.

But now, with new light, we believe in God's love. Something in our souls answers to His call. We cannot always explain this feeling, but the beautiful picture of a heavenly Father shines upon us. We are His children: we can speak to Him. This means much more than just thinking.

Will Gate.

One more, and we are done. To think and to feel,— these help us to understand God and religion; but there is another important way,— that of doing. First we think, then we feel, then we act. By the Will Gate come noble deeds, great examples, splendid reforms. Character is made by the will working steadily right on, in good habits.

Words of Jesus.

Jesus often spoke of the Will Gate, or the Gate of Duty. Not those who cried, "Lord, Lord!" but those who did what was commanded, were to enter the kingdom of heaven. By doing our duty we honor our Father in heaven. Conscience is at this gate. So, also, is good-will, obedience, heroism. What a splendid array of companions! The martyrs, reformers, are there, and all the true, faithful ones from home, store, field, and office.

The Kingdom.

They all have one object,— to build a kingdom, the kingdom of God. Religion is a creed, is a prayer. It is also a work. That work is to make the world better. If we leave out the Gate of Duty, we destroy all the rest. So you see how all I have said bears on our faith. "Thy kingdom come!" That is a thought, and Thought Gate is open. "Thy kingdom come!" rings in our minds and stirs our hearts, and Heart Gate is open. "Thy kingdom come!" leads us to action, to do something noble and beautiful; and then Will Gate is open.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

The figure of the three gates is used to make the subject easier. Draw out the pupils as to animals and their power to think. Show how the truth-seeker is the God-seeker. There is a fine opportunity here to interest your class in noble examples of thinkers who have "thought God's thoughts after Him"; in saints, who were great and good at heart; in reformers, who dared all to make religion a real thing,— thought, feeling, action. Explain how God comes to us, is revealed in us, by these three channels.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What was the preceding lesson-talk about? 2. What is the subject of this one? 3. Can you name the three gates? 4. What is wonder? 5. Why are we curious? 6. What is the name for a truth-seeker? 7. What does the Heart Gate stand for? 8. Why is it beautiful? 9. Why do men build churches? 10. Can you give any other name for Will Gate? 11. What about faith and work? 12. What about building a kingdom?

LESSON THREE.

I. THE TALK.

Before we take up the separate points of our faith and talk about them, I want to speak of another gate by which we receive great help.

Memory Gate.

If we did not remember anything, we could not think, feel, or act. So you see we are like four-squared towers, a gate on each side,—four great gates. By memory we are able to call up the past and add to it. This is the way history grows, and mankind climbs higher. We know more than those who lived hundreds of years ago, because we remember what they knew and remember all that has been said and done in the past.

Therefore.

So I ask you to "learn by heart," as some say, to memorize a form of Our Faith now, at the beginning of our studies and talks. I think it better than to wait until we have finished. At the end I will give you something else to memorize. This we are now to learn was written by one of our leading preachers, Rev. Frederick B. Mott, a clear thinker. He believes in this faith, and tells us how to use it every day.

I BELIEVE IN THE FATHERHOOD OF GOD.

Therefore, I have no fear, but go about my daily work in trustfulness and gladness of heart.

I BELIEVE IN THE BROTHERHOOD OF MAN.

Therefore, I love my fellow-men, and act with good-will toward all.

I BELIEVE IN THE LEADERSHIP OF JESUS.

Therefore, I follow him.

I BELIEVE IN SALVATION BY CHARACTER.

Therefore, I keep my heart pure, and my thoughts set upon high things, that I may grow into the life divine.

I BELIEVE IN THE PROGRESS OF MANKIND, ONWARD AND UPWARD FOREVER.

Therefore, the cares of this world cannot utterly weigh me down. The glory of the unseen is ever before me. I live not for this world only, but in anticipation of an infinite future.

The Greatest Thing.

The greatest thing in this world is religion. How is this? Because we are always wondering who made this world, and how it grew, and where we came from, and what we ought to do. When we are gone, others will wonder and think, too.

To Be and to Do.

But, the more we wonder and think and ask questions, the more we ask one particular question: What ought I to be and what ought I to do? No matter how large the world grows and how old the earth gets to be, there is always the greatest question about the greatest thing: What must I do about religion? How can I get the good out of it? Then comes a little word that helps us.

Now.

Yes! That small word is really a great one. Now! We are talking over our faith, in order to get something clear and strong from religion which will help us now. If it helps us now, it will help us by and by. If it is true now, it will be true in the future. If it is good for this life, it will be good for the next life.

I will Remember.

I must remember our faith because I cannot talk about it as I ought if I forget it. If we do not keep memory gate open, then we have nothing clear in our mind. You know how it is with those who travel. Some see and forget. Others see and remember a great deal, but it is blurred. Others see and can tell all about it. What makes the difference?

Picking Out.

I will remember because these points are keys, they unlock doors. There are great things and small things in the mind. Now the secret of getting the most good from religion is to learn and remember a few truths, they will call up the rest.

Growth.

I must remember, so that I can make my character grow. The first time we learn anything by memory, it is only just planted. We must keep it there faithfully in our thought, cultivate it with love and study, and then it grows and bears fruit. What we are depends very much on keeping in mind some great thoughts.

Wait.

You may reply that you do not understand some of the words. But wait. Learn them and wait. We all read many sayings we do not understand entirely at first. Indeed, we never know all they mean. But it would be wrong to omit learning them and treasuring them in our hearts and minds. Every day they will become clearer and dearer.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

The object of this lesson is twofold: to give a practical turn to the general subject, and to enforce the value of memory. Religious teaching with us has often gone too far astray from the best methods. We begin at the wrong end. Let us lay a simple, strong foundation: then we will build and decorate. If one lesson is not enough, take another in which to implant and illustrate the five points and comment by Mr. Mott. Have the pupils memorize them thoroughly. At the end of our course I will use Mrs. Beatley's "Exposition of Our Faith" as another memorizing lesson. Talk over the differences between a religious faith that dwells on the future and a statement like this that concerns daily life. Explain the "logic" or "therefore" of religious truth. Define and defend the position that religion is the greatest element in human life, when viewed historically, or as a spring in human conduct.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What is the fourth gate? 2. Why is it so important? 3. Could we become men and women without it? 4. How is it necessary in religion? 5. Who wrote some "therefores" about our faith? 6. Can you repeat them? 7. Are they intended to save us in a future life or to help us now? 8. What is the greatest thing in this world? 9. Why? 10. What is the greatest question in this world? 11. Why must we remember? 12. What is meant by "picking out"? 13. How does character grow? 14. What is meant by "learn and wait"?

LESSON FOUR.

I. THE TALK.

Let us divide our talk about the Fatherhood of God, which is our subject, into three parts. To-day we will look back and see what were the old ideas about God. In the next lesson we will take up what the Bible says about it; and in the third talk we must answer the question, What ought we to do?

In the Beginning.

Why is it not good for us to have some questions and answers now? In that way we can make clearer what we are trying to learn.

QUESTION. Did men think about God at first, long ago, as we do?

ANSWER. No, they had many gods.

Q. What objects did they honor in their worship?

A. The sun, moon, stars, trees, winds, mountains, and many other things.

Q. Were all these gods good?

A. No, some were bad.

Q. Did all the people have the same gods?

A. No, tribes and nations had different gods, and they were often at war.

Q. How do you explain this?

A. People were ignorant in those days. They made ideas of gods after their own passions.

Q. Was it fear or love that made them worship gods?

A. Mostly fear.

Q. What did the savages do?

A. They offered sacrifices of all kinds to make peace with their gods.

Afterward.

You see that wonder and fear were the beginnings of the thought of the Creator. As we stand by the Thought Gate and see what was in the minds of the peoples centuries ago, a strange procession passes by, until true ideas came.

Power.

The savages saw a great strange world. It was full of power, force, might. Storms, night and day, seasons and sickness, were stronger than they. So, to make friends with this Great Power, they did all they could. They bowed, terror-stricken, in prayer, they ran into caves, they worshipped in their blind way.

QUESTION. How was all this changed?

ANSWER. Men thought, and there came answers to their thoughts.

Q. What were the great helps to this nobler idea of God?

A. The teachings of Moses and of Jesus.

Q. Can we mention other important sources?

A. Yes, science, education in schools, the spread of discovery and civilization.

Q. How did these help to bring a true thought of God?

A. By showing law and order in all things.

Q. What do we mean by saying that we have answers to our searching minds?

A. God is Thought, and He answers the search for truth.

Q. What two words do we use in the place of wonder and fear?

A. Reason and love.

Q. Can we ever see God?

A. Only through His works.

Q. Do we learn of Him through ourselves?

A. Yes, very much, because man is the greatest creation of God we know.

Q. What, then, should be our object?

A. To be good, wise, noble, because in that way we are able to understand God and His laws.

Growing.

Thus we see that man has been growing to a nobler idea of God. Why men did not know at first what we know now is something we cannot answer. The universe grew; this earth grew; everything has come up from beginnings. So we believe that the law of growth is a good one. I suppose other peoples after us will know more, and have a worthier idea of the Creator.

One Root.

In looking back, we see that there was one hope,— to know more about the Creator. The old peoples were honest, and worshipped according to their light. Are we true to the light we have? It is very great. We believe in one God, who made all things, who rules all things in goodness, who is our heavenly Father. Such a faith ought to inspire us to be obedient, brave, and noble. An English poet, George Herbert, has truly said,—

All may of Thee partake;
Nothing so small can be
But draws, when acted for Thy sake,
Greatness and worth from Thee.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

You have a fertile field here. The actual facts of early, primeval worship are always interesting to pupils. Trace briefly the growth of ideas about God. Give some account of old customs and superstitions. Yet preserve the line of continuous development. Show how the process of ascent has been natural and steady. Religions have changed, but religion has remained. Encourage the class to ask questions and to discuss the subject. Some memory work may be done, in the questions and answers here given, and the stanza from Herbert.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. Have you read anywhere about savages and their forms of worship?

2. Did the people of old believe alike?

3. Do they have the same faith now?

4. Did one tribe have gods that were hostile to the gods of other tribes?

5. How did the men in old times explain sickness and calamities and death?

6. How do we explain these things?

7. Why are churches built?

8. Why is God worshipped?

9. Which is the greater, what we see or what we do not see?

LESSON FIVE.

I. THE TALK.

In our preceding talk we looked back to see how the thought of God had grown and changed. Now we will take the Bible and see what it tells us about the same subject. The Bible is our great text-book, our guide in religious matters.

Differences.

But, when we begin to search and read, we find there are different views. The Old Testament has some things in it which do not agree with the New Testament. That is not strange when you remember how the Bible grew and what it really is.

Early Hebrews.

We find that the Jews changed their ideas of God, and the later religion was finer and more spiritual than the first. This only proves what we stated in the lesson before this,— that all round the world the thought of God grew. It rose, like a sun, higher and clearer. There are tribes of savages now on islands and in Africa who are very ignorant and superstitious. They resemble the old peoples, in the early Hebrew times.

Moses.

As we read on, we learn that a great leader appeared, called Moses, who taught the Jews to believe in one God. He rebuked his people because they worshipped idols. It was a long time before the Jews were brought to the true faith. Years and years passed by, and Jesus was born among the Jews in Palestine. He completed what Moses began.

The Heavenly Father.

Jesus was the Great Teacher, because he told the people that God was not only powerful, but good. He taught that God was good to all, and cared for all He had made. Then others, his disciples, repeated the message; and now everywhere in Christian lands the preachers are saying this, and everywhere it is taught. But this truth is not yet really understood and fully accepted.

The New Testament

Let us use some questions and answers.

QUESTION. What is the first teaching in the New Testament about God?

ANSWER. That He is all-powerful. By Him were all things created and by Him are all things sustained.

Q. What is the next truth taught?

A. That He is near us. In Him we live and move and have our being.

Q. And the third is what?

A. God changes not. In Him is no variableness.

Q. Can we mention a fourth great truth?

A. God is love. His mercy is upon all and His loving-kindness never ceases.

Q. Is there yet another?

A. He is one and indivisible; God is Spirit.

Psalm and Poetry.

In the Old Testament is a beautiful Psalm beginning, "The Lord is my shepherd." There are other poetical passages which young people do not always understand. Sometimes we read that "God spake," or that God rides on the winds, or that God is in heaven. Most of these are strong poetical figures. If we read that God holds the earth in the hollow of His hand, we know that to be poetry; for God has no hands.

Care.

Everything that is beautiful and full of rich sentiment we ought to use; but we must be careful and not make these things too real, or, as we say, too literal. If we speak of God as on His throne, we must not think of Him as sitting on a real throne. He has no throne. He is not like a king. We mean by that poetical figure God is powerful.

Over all.

By the teaching of the New Testament we also find that God cares for the bad as well as for the good, and sends sunshine and rain upon the just and the unjust. That proves the Fatherhood. He is wiser than we, and we must not make selfish prayers or indulge in selfish wishes toward Him. Do the right, and leave results to Him. The early Hebrews thought God cared more for them than for all other tribes, and expected Him to give them victory in every battle with enemies. Jesus rebuked that feeling.

God Worship.

Here are some verses worthy of committing to memory, which express what I have just said. They are by W. I. Haskell.

In olden times men worshipped
At altars built of stone,
And thought God loved them only,
And called none else his own.
But Jesus tells us truly,
That worship undefiled
Is paid by hearts as trusting
As of a little child.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Instead of making the contrasts of the Old and New Testaments harmful, they can be turned to helpful uses in this lesson. The gradual growth of the Hebraic idea of God, from Jehovah (or Yahweh) to the heavenly Father, is striking and cheering. It was steady and sure. Bring forward the noble Psalms, Isaiah's phrases, and the work of Moses. The emphasis must rest on the New Testament, however, which is the flower and fruit of Monotheism. Consider, as far as time allows, the five great truths taught by Christianity concerning Deity. On them rest serious results in life to us all. Moreover, this careful treatment will set the teaching of Jesus in true light. You can make good use of M. J. Savage's "Belief in God" at this point.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What is the Bible to us? 2. Are the same things about God taught in the Old as in the New Testament? 3. What great character led the Jews out of idolatry? 4. Was Jesus of the Jewish people? 5. What did he teach about God? 6. Can you mention the five God truths of the New Testament? 7. What is a poetical figure? 8. Is there truth in it? 9. Must we be careful in our descriptions of God? 10. Is God good to the bad? 11. How?

LESSON SIX.

I. THE TALK.

Now let us talk over what we ought to think and feel and do, since the Creator of all things is Eternal Goodness. And, first, I will bring you these words of Rev. W. C. Gannett, a poet and preacher. [Commit to Memory.]

From heart to heart, from creed to creed,
The hidden river runs.
It quickens all the ages down,
It binds the sires to sons,—
The stream of Faith, whose source is God,
Whose sound, the sound of prayer,
Whose meadows are the holy lives
Upspringing everywhere.

Worship.

To our heavenly Father worship is due because He is the source of all our blessings. Churches are built to express this feeling of reverence and piety. Worship means gratitude for life and for what life brings to us. Worship means acknowledgment of God, who is ready to hear our prayers and to help us in trouble.

True Worship.

We must go to church with the right spirit. The Bible says we must worship in spirit and in truth, in the beauty of holiness. Not what we say or sing is always the best, but what we feel in our hearts and truly think in our minds.

Obedience.

If we believe in the Fatherhood of God, then we must be dutiful and obey His laws. They are written on our bodies, in our souls, over the sky and earth. Good, wise men read them and tell us what they are.

In Scripture.

We find some of these laws or rules in the Bible. The Ten Commandments, the Beatitudes, the Golden Rule, and many other things are God's rules for us to learn and obey. A true son or daughter obeys the reasonable wishes of the father. Much more ought we to do His will who is supremely great and wise. To do this is, as Jesus said, life eternal.

All Life Divine.

The next thought is this: all life is divine. Let us explain the meaning of this by question and answer: —

QUESTION. How did the peoples long ago think of God and this world?

ANSWER. That He created the earth and went away to live elsewhere.

Q. What was the idea about this globe?

A. That the earth was flat and the sky full of holes to let light through.

Q. How do we think about these things now.

A. God is everywhere. He is in birds, flowers, skies, in all things.

Q. Is He with us all the time?

A. Yes. Never is He absent. He speaks in our conscience, and is nearer than we can think.

Thoughtfulness.

If we believe this seriously, then we are thoughtful and careful. We will be kind to animals; we will respect the small things; we will honor the faithful humble. God will be seen in all things.

Joy.

From the Fatherhood of God we receive joy. This is His world. We are under His orders. There is something for us to do, and He will help our honest, best plans. You are often told to have a purpose in life. But what good would a purpose be if we had no power but ourselves to carry it out?

What Paul said.

A man, long ago, started out to do a great work. He would have failed, had he not said over and over to himself, "I am a worker with God." It was Saint Paul, the zealous missionary. Nothing could discourage him, because he felt sure God was helping. That is joy.

Finding Truth.

One more, the fifth blessing from this belief in the Fatherhood of God: We are sure that we can know more and be more every year. And we feel sure that all people and the whole people will find truth. Then they become better, wiser, stronger.

Better.

The Father is ready to give new thoughts, new visions, new hopes to His children. But they must search, and find. They must knock on the closed doors, and they will open.

Q. What did Jesus say?

A. Do the will of the Father, and you will learn His doctrine.

Q. What does that mean?

A. Live as though you really believed in the Fatherhood of God, and you will grow wiser and happier every day.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Through the Thought Gate; steady, strong thoughts of God as a spiritual presence. By the Heart Gate; feelings of worship and reverence. His name not to be taken lightly. The Will Gate; emphasize doing. Show how religion always needs doers. Practical religion is not everything, but fruit should be found on fruit-bearing trees. Repeat this stanza from Rev. F. L. Hosmer's poem, "The Larger Faith," and explain it to the pupils: —

> And nobler yet shall duty grow,
> And more shall worship be,
> When Thou art found in all our life,
> And all our life in Thee.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What is our particular subject to-day? 2. Who wrote the lines beginning, "From heart to heart"? 3. Can you repeat the whole? 4. What does the poetry mean? 5. What is the first thing mentioned after the poem? 6. Why ought we to worship God? 7. How? 8. What are churches for, and can we worship anywhere else? 9. If God is good, then what is the second command? 10. What do we mean by "His laws"? 11. Is the world full of God? 12. How did people think long ago? 13. What did Paul say? 14. What can you remember about finding truth?

LESSON SEVEN.

I. THE TALK.

We come now to the second point of our Faith.

Why do we believe in the Brotherhood of Man?

Because of several reasons, two being very strong.

What are those two reasons?

If God is a heavenly Father, then all men are His children and our brothers.

Will you give the second?

The brotherhood of man means justice for all, progress for all, and love for all. Therefore, it must be helpful and true.

Did the tribes and savages of old believe this?

No, they were always at war. Only those of their tribe or family were treated well.

Do all nations live up to this belief now?

No, far from it. But good will and peace are increasing in the world.

Looking Back.

We can learn some things best by looking back. In that way we see how mistakes were made and learn how to avoid them. Men in the old times, before reason and Christianity shed light more fully, thought the best way was to be very selfish. They looked on all other peoples as enemies. The idea was to accomplish everything by force. The chief or warrior was the great man.

Our View.

We do not think this is true or right. Because we live in a nobler age, we see that each one depends on others. He who is selfish and hard hurts himself. We need the help of others, and they need us. No one can live a good life and be cruel or selfish.

This Republic.

This country of ours is a place where men are trying to work out the idea of the Brotherhood of Man. In all the history of the world no such opportunity was ever given before. In the public schools the rights of the humblest child are taught. There is always room for those who are trying to make an honorable way in the world.

Liberty.

What does liberty mean?

Freedom for ourselves and for others to live happy and useful lives.

How can that freedom be secured for ourselves?

By making and enforcing laws that protect all the citizens.

Personal.

But there is something deeper than laws that are made in Congress and put into books. I will tell you what it is: Personal good will and personal kindness. If every one who believes in the Brotherhood of Man would make the truth go from the Mind Gate into and through the Heart Gate, what a change would come over the earth!

Mistakes.

Some persons think they could help on the "good time" of this brotherhood by tearing down all laws and by having no government. This is a great mistake. We could not live well if there were no laws or rulers or safeguards against the bad. Everything we have gained would be lost, and back we might go into the old savage, cruel times.

What is Equality?

You will hear some persons say, All men are equal. So they are before the law. All men are entitled to justice and good treatment. But all men are not equal in ability or in goodness or in spirit. You see how true that is in the public school. But, though boys and girls differ in many ways, they are all treated alike by the teachers. They are equal in their rights.

A Picture.

Let us suppose. Suppose in a family there are eight children, boys and girls. Each one is different,— different in tastes, ages, and dispositions. The father and mother look on them with equal love; and they are equally cared for, but in various ways. So, in the Brotherhood spirit, we do not mean by that a careless way of doing good. We must not treat all just alike.

What to Do.

In our next talk I will tell you what Jesus said and what he asked us to do. He taught more fully than any one before him the Brotherhood of Man. His words are wise and lasting. They will throw light on our duties now and here.

A Vision.

Prophets and poets have told us of their visions. They have seen a glorious time to come, when The Brotherhood shall be realized. One sings as follows: —

O Earth! Thy future shall be great and glorious,
With its reformers toiling in the van,
Till truth and love shall reign o'er all, victorious,
And earth be given to freedom and to man.

[This stanza, by T. L. Harris, should be committed to memory.]

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

You have in this lesson a subject that is of vital importance It concerns the actual world of society, government, civilization. The young people must be shown early the beauty of the Golden Rule and the justice of fair play. Here we open the topic, but in the next two lessons we can go still deeper. Christianity is on its test as a religion of every-day fairness and good will. Various modern books will help you,—any that treat social questions and public problems. Dole's "Citizen and Neighbor" or Everett's "Primer of Ethics" is likely to furnish suggestions.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What is our subject? 2. Can you give the two chief reasons for believing in the Brotherhood of Man? 3. Do you think of others? 4. What was the condition of mankind in the early days of the world? 5. What were the causes? 6. Do we depend on each other? 7. What is this Republic trying to do? 8 What is liberty? 9. Is it liberty to do as you please? 10. What is equality? 11. What vision is referred to in the poetry quoted? 12. Can you repeat the lines?

LESSON EIGHT.

I. THE TALK.

In the preceding lesson we looked back to see how it had been in history with regard to the brotherhood of man. We saw war, discord, selfishness, but all the time a steady gain for good will and justice.

The Teaching of Jesus.

Now let us see what Jesus taught on this subject. The spirit and precept of this Great Teacher have not spread so widely as he hoped or the world needed. They are marching on, though slowly.

A Universal Prayer.

Jesus gave a prayer to his disciples, and all Christendom repeats it,— Our Father who art in heaven. Hallowed be Thy name.

By this he meant that we are all of one family; and, if we think of Him as a Father, and hallow that thought, we must be kind and good to each other.

Thy kingdom come, is another part. That kingdom is good will, peace, right, happiness. Then nothing will do but we must help to bring that kingdom in; and the true result will be a brotherhood.

The Golden Rule.

Jesus taught a rule of life so beautiful it has been called "Golden": Do unto others as ye would they should do to you. If this were practised, the brotherhood would soon come.

The Beatitude.

Jesus taught the beatitude: Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.

This does not seem possible at first. It means that those who are willing to learn, willing to help, willing to "lend a hand," willing to be just, are sure to fill the earth with blessings to man, and will inherit earth's choicest rewards.

The Parable.

Jesus gave us the great story of the Good Samaritan, and answered the question, Who is my neighbor? He is our neighbor who suffers in any way. To relieve the distressed in mind or body is to be a true disciple.

Forgiveness.

Jesus taught the law of forgiveness. Dwell not on injuries. Overlook the slight, the wrong, the insult. Forgive a hundred times. Be patient and long-suffering.

The Great Man.

Jesus called him great who was willing to serve. He who did the most good ranked highest. In the kingdom of God the humble and the faithful were the greatest.

The Second Commandment.

Jesus called love to man the second commandment of life eternal. The first was love to God. He even asked us to love our enemies. This, too, seems impossible; but it is not. We can-

not treat our enemies as we would our friends, but a spirit of fairness and affection toward even foes we may cultivate.

QUESTION. How did Jesus enforce these teachings about the brotherhood?

ANSWER. By mingling with all peoples in all ranks of society.

Q. Did he give particular attention to the poor and obscure?

A. Yes. He spent his time in going about doing good.

Q. Did he form a company of teachers?

A. Yes. He selected obscure men to be disciples, and they went with him. He called them "friends."

Q. What was the last, highest command Jesus gave to the world?

A. Love others as I have loved you.

The Gospel.

Jesus had a "gospel" of good news. Others had said many wise truths before him; but he lived these truths, and died for them.

Christian Hopes.

These are the hopes about the Brotherhood of Man which Christians hold:

That war will cease.
That arbitration will come in.
That fair play will prevail.
That philanthropy will spread.
That personal honor will increase.
That the spirit of Jesus will deepen.
That class distinctions will lessen.
That cruel ambition will decrease.
That all churches will stand for a brotherhood of nations, sects, and souls.

[Commit to memory.]

O thou great friend to all the sons of men,
Who once appeared in humblest guise below,
Sin to rebuke, to break the captive's chain,
And call thy brethren forth from want and woe!
We look to thee: thy truth is still the light
Which guides the nations, groping on their way.

Theodore Parker.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Jesus gave no special rules for organizing a brotherhood: he did more. He gave an ideal, and manifested a spirit, which are adequate to create plans and determine policies for times to come. Phillips Brooks's "The Influence of Jesus" and Dr. F. G. Peabody's "Jesus and Society" will be found helpful in this and the succeeding lesson.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What is meant by the "Universal Prayer"? 2. Was there any form of the "Golden Rule" known before Jesus? 3. What beatitude is mentioned in the lesson? 4. What is a "beatitude"? 5. Can you tell the parable of the Good Samaritan? 6. How did Jesus teach forgiveness? 7. In his sight, who was the great man? 8. What is the second great commandment? 9. In what ways did Jesus show that he believed what he taught? 10. Can you remember any or all of the Christian hopes about the Brotherhood of Man?

LESSON NINE.

THE FUTURE. [Commit to memory.]

Great things shall be! A loftier race
  Than e'er the world hath known shall rise,
With flame of freedom in their souls
  And light of science in their eyes.

New arts shall bloom of loftier mould,
  And mightier music thrill the skies,
And every life shall be a song,
  When all the earth is paradise.

John Addington Symonds.

I. THE TALK.

The Brotherhood of Man advances slowly. What are the obstacles? Let us name some, and also give the cure for the troubles.

My Rights.

Many persons are always thinking of their rights, but rarely do they feel the responsibility of duties.

He who puts his rights first every time grows to be quarrelsome, sensitive, jealous, unhappy. Our rights are so combined with our duties as to make it difficult, often, to tell which is which. What are rights? How do we get them? Where do they come from? These questions go deep, and must be answered.

Greed.

Then men are greedy, pushing, over-ambitious. This is common, but a mistake as harmful as it is common. The old idea of looking after one's self, of fighting, continues. Whereas the best way to "get on," in a wise sense, is to do so with others. Selfishness is a poison. It does not show its worst effect at the first, but in the end it kills character and ruins society.

The Brotherhood is kept back by passion and pride, two old foes to human welfare. The cure must be found by giving early right training, by holding up noble examples, by shaming the mean and miserly spirit.

Happiness.

Wrong ideas as to happiness prevent the Brotherhood from growing. Some think money is everything; but dollars do not necessarily make happiness. Money is only a means to an end. It can help to things that are good, enjoyable, comfortable, uplifting. Money, when used as an idol, makes slaves of men. They think of nothing but adding to their wealth in any way possible. Their souls grow smaller while their treasures grow larger.

Government.

A government of the people, for the people, and by the people, ought to be a brotherhood. If it is not, it falls short of its best. Such a government is a Republic, and a Republic aims to deal justly by all men.

Patriotism.

QUESTION. What makes a true patriot?

ANSWER. Loyalty and love of country.

Q. How can these traits be shown?

A. By obeying laws, respecting officers, manifesting public spirit, and making sacrifices.

Q. Who is the bad citizen?

A. He who tries to get all he can from the government without giving anything.

Q. Who is the good citizen?

A. He who is willing to support and serve.

Q. Is there a Brotherhood of nations?

A. Yes. We should treat all peoples justly and with sympathy.

Justice.

There are three great reasons, as we have seen, why the Brotherhood of Man is entitled to our support. First, it is right. We are put into this world by a Being whose laws clearly point to equality and good will among men.

The Best.

Next it is best for ourselves to believe and extend this truth. A hermit in a cave may think it is best for his soul to live alone. He is mistaken. His own soul starves, and he cannot become what he ought to be in such a way. He needs society, books, life, duties, to draw out his character.

Christ-like.

The third great reason is that such a course is after the example of Jesus. It is following the precepts of one who taught the Art of Living. How to live wisely, nobly, happily, is the life question. Jesus gave us the answer to this question. Rev. Charles F. Dole has well expressed this:

"We believe in Jesus' way, as the way of God's heroes, the teachers, helpers, and benefactors of mankind. And we hold to the brotherhood of those who love and serve man."

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Questions of civic, political, and social nature are now prominent. Young people take early interest in these matters. But the chief purpose should be to develop a sense of personal responsibility. To lead the scholars to admire generous examples, and to convince them that no one is exempt from a share in the grand work. Mrs. K. G. Wells's "Rights and Duties" and C. F. Dole's "Citizen and Neighbor" are good sources for practical suggestions. Draw out your pupils; get them to discuss the subjects of meekness, non-resistance, forgiveness, almsgiving, arbitration, capital and labor, etc.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. If we have more rights, do we also have more duties? 2. Where do we get our rights? 3. What are the dangers when we begin to think too much about our own comfort and pleasure? 4. What is greed? 5. Do you admire a miser? 6. What is money, an end or a means? 7. Does happiness consist in what we have or in what we are? 8. What is a Republic? 9. What is patriotism? 10. Can you describe a good citizen and a bad one? 11. Can you give the three reasons why we ought to work for the Brotherhood of Man?

LESSON TEN.

I. THE TALK.

We have come now to the third point in Our Faith:

The Leadership of Jesus.

Before we get into our talk, let me read to you these verses from Luke. You will find them in the fourth chapter, verses 16 to 21. They bring up a beautiful scene in Nazareth, the home of Jesus, and give us a picture of his first preaching in the place where he went to church in his childhood:

Jesus came to Nazareth where he had been brought up; and, as his custom was, he went into the synagogue on the Sabbath Day, and stood up for to read. And there was handed to him the book of the prophet Isaiah. He opened the book, and turned to the place where it was written as follows: "The spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; He hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised, to preach the acceptable year of the Lord."

He closed the book, gave it again to the minister, and sat down. And the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened on him.

Then Jesus began to preach, and said, "This day are these words from Isaiah, the prophet, fulfilled in your ears, and unto your eyes."

The Meaning.

What did Jesus mean? This, that he had a mission, to lead his countrymen, the Jews, into a kingdom of God. In this kingdom should reign love, righteousness, holiness. As Jewish prophets had foretold such a Messenger, he, Jesus, was to do the work and deliver the message.

QUESTION. Was this the kind of leader expected by the Jews at that time?

ANSWER. No! They looked for a King, a great Ruler, who should lead to temporal, or earthly power.

Q. What was the name given to this expected leader?

A. Messiah, meaning the anointed one, the Christ.

Q. Had the Jews been looking long for such a King?

A. Yes, for many weary years.

Q. What is our view of Jesus?

A. That he came to help the world, so that, in spirit and in truth, men might worship truly, serve faithfully, and die bravely.

Q. What more?

A. We believe that by his "gospel" the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdom of God, even as Jesus prayed.

Looking Back.

Following the regular habit of these lessons, let us in this first one on this subject look back to see what has taken place. How far has this leadership been accepted, and what has prevented the world-wide "power of Jesus' name"? The Jews did

not, as a whole, receive Jesus as the Christ. After his death his "gospel" slowly spread. For nineteen centuries it has been preached, and missionaries have gone all over the globe; yet there are more people who are not Christians than are named under Jesus, the leader. How is this?

Great Religions.

Other countries, old and populous, have religions of their own. Mohammed, Confucius, Buddha, are names revered in other lands. In the teachings of those leaders are many things similar to the teachings of Jesus.

Errors.

Then we have hurt our own religion very often by presenting it in wrong ways. Sometimes by war, sometimes by erroneous doctrine, sometimes by bad customs, the Christians have made enemies of others whom they tried to convert.

Education.

A religion, such as we hold Christianity to be, needs education to go with it. Men's minds must be opened to truth, their hearts opened to ideals, their motives trained to high reasons. Now education is slow in its work, though sure.

Evolution.

I think we ought to use the word "evolution" right here. A very easy word to understand. It means growth, unfolding, development. A cornfield in September is a result of evolution. A statue in marble is a result of evolution. A star in the sky testifies to evolution. A soul in the world is a witness to evolution. Christianity is in evolution.

Our Belief.

We believe in the Leadership of Jesus, because he really leads.
Because he shows an inspiring example.
Because his words are true.
Because his spirit is divine.
Because his precepts make for righteousness.
Because his faith in God and man is everlasting.
Because his hope is eternal.
Because his love is boundless.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

I think young people are always curious to know why, if Jesus was "sent of God," he did not conquer the world at once. Why does God allow his truth, so necessary to mankind, to linger on the way? In this lesson you can bring in modern thought to explain the mystery. Man is not recovering from a "fall": he is rising from a cradle. Jesus is the great type of human hope and possibility. His authority is from the power of God manifested in human sonship. It is a natural leadership, not a supernatural command. Lay these foundations.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What did Jesus do at Nazareth? 2. Did he go to church there in his youth? 3. Who gave him a book to read? 4. Can you tell the name of the book? 5. Is it in our Bible? 6. Do you understand what happened? 7. What kind of leader did the Jews expect? 8. What does Messiah mean? 9. Are there other great religions besides Christianity? 10. Why does our religion spread so slowly? 11. What does the word "evolution" mean?

LESSON ELEVEN.

I. THE TALK.

What does the Bible say about Jesus? That is the second division of our present subject. To quote very much would fill too great space. I think the best thing to do is to take one saying, attributed to Jesus in the Gospel of John, and dwell on it. The memorable passage is as follows:

To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth.

Real Leadership.

This makes real leadership. Remember that Jesus was a "witness" in the full sense. He lived for certain truths, he suffered for them, he died for them, he has been honored and glorified for this martyr, witness example.

QUESTION. What is a witness?

ANSWER. One who testifies.

Q. To what truths did Jesus testify?

A. To the Fatherhood of God, the Brotherhood of Man, Salvation by Character, and the Progress of Mankind onward and upward.

Q. Did he bear witness of himself?

A. Jesus asked that his works should speak for him.

Q. What name did he most often apply to himself?

A. Son of Man.

Q. Any other of frequent use?

A. Son of God.

Q. What did he call his disciples and others?

A. Sons of God.

A Difference.

You may be asked, Do you believe in Jesus? or, Have you faith in Jesus? Perhaps the reply does not come readily, for you have not thought out just what to say. Let us make it all clear.

It is one thing to have faith *in* Jesus, quite another thing is it to have faith *about* Jesus. We believe in Jesus as a leader. His spirit conveys to us a gift of healing and help. He arouses our own powers. He shows us a Way where we can safely walk.

Doctrinal.

The belief *about* Jesus is theological, and divides persons. Questions arise as to what he was by nature, how many miracles he did, where he should be placed in rank. We may differ, and still all have faith in Jesus, the leader. And our faith will depend for its power not on what we think doctrinally, but on our loyalty and love to the spirit and teachings of the Great Example.

What Jesus Said.

Q. How did Jesus command?

A. By love.

Q. What did he say?

A. Follow me.

Q. What rules did he lay down?

A. Serve man, your brother, and worship God, your Father, even as I do.

Q. How did he speak of his disciples?
A. We are one.
Q. What did this mean?
A. That, as God and Jesus were one in spirit and life, so Jesus and his followers may be one.

The Poet's Word.

The poet F. L. Hosmer, of our faith, has told us in verse what it is to "follow Jesus":

[Commit to memory.]

"Peace on the earth, good will to men!"
Before us goes the star
That leads us on to holier birth,
And life diviner far.
O star of human faith and hope,
Thy light shall lead us on,
Until it fades in morning's glow,
And heaven on earth is won.

Revelation.

We often hear Jesus spoken of as bringing a revelation. What does that mean? This: Jesus reveals God by his life and work. Jesus reveals our own human nature, too, by his life and work.

Mediator.

Now we understand the word "mediator," which is found in the Bible. Jesus mediates, or brings together. His "gospel" helps man to know God better and to serve Him wiser.

Life.

Jesus is our leader because he makes life. He saw no death. He knew no end. He did not point to another world, and forget this. "He brought life and immortality into the light," says Scripture. He did not create religion, nor teach before others the truth of immortality; but he placed noble living and eternal life in the light of a deeper faith and a grander hope.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Much of the old doctrinal discussion about Jesus is over. Yet some teachers may feel the need of opening the subject. Those who wish material will find excellent, concise statements, with Scripture references, in James Freeman Clarke's "Manual of Unitarian Belief," chapters on Jesus Christ, Faith in Christ, and The Work of Christ. See also Savage's and Dole's "Catechisms," chapters on Jesus, for the later treatment. Emphasize the inherent spiritual greatness of Jesus. It needs no artificial support. We of liberal views aim to make the claims of leadership normal, permanent, and true to the sayings of Jesus himself.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. Can you repeat the Scripture passage at the beginning of the lesson? 2. From which Gospel was it taken? 3. What is a witness? 4. To what truths did Jesus testify? 5. What name did he most often apply to himself? 6. Can you explain the difference between faith *in* Jesus and faith *about* him? 7. Do doctrines divide people? 8. Can we get along without doctrines? 9. How do Christians come together? 10. How did Jesus rule? 11. What did he reveal? 12. What is the meaning of the word "mediator"?

LESSON TWELVE.

I. THE TALK.

We will finish in this talk our consideration of the leadership of Jesus. We have looked back and seen the times when Jesus was born; how he was received; what was expected; and the slow spread of the gospel he taught.

We have also looked into the Bible to find out what Jesus said and did; what was said of him by others. Now comes the question, What ought we to do ourselves? What does this leadership mean for us?

His Words.

One of our first duties is to learn what Jesus said himself, and to distinguish between that and the words of others. Much of the trouble in churches and religion has been made by false reports of what Jesus said.

Theologians.

Many scholarly men have studied the New Testament, and honestly reported things about Jesus and his teachings which we do not believe. This is theology, or religion made into creeds. We must find our Leader in the Gospels,— Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John.

The Whole.

Then we must take the whole account, not parts. We ought not to build on single texts, or single verses. The search should be to know what Jesus had at heart; what his aim was; how he looked at the world in the large.

His Spirit.

In that way we "follow." We cannot do as Jesus did, exactly. He lived in a different time, in a different land, and talked in a different tongue. He does not command us to follow him literally. If we did, then we should not follow him really.

Aim.

If we aim for the same things Jesus had in view, then we follow him. Then we are his disciples. We have seen what those objects are. Wherever we are placed, the Jesus spirit and the Jesus aim can be maintained.

Explanation.

This explains the strange fact that there have been disciples of Jesus in every sect. Though divided in many respects, some have had the spirit of Jesus and his aim, and glorified the Father in heaven by good works.

Therefore.

Therefore, it is plain that we do not make Jesus our Leader, simply by believing certain things certain persons, however wise, have said about him. We are not any more successful when we build a church and make persons members in it, and call them Christians.

Not a Founder.

We must remember that Jesus did not "found" Christianity. As Dr. Furness used to say, it founded itself.

Q. What did Jesus say?
A. A sower went forth to sow.
Q. What did he mean?
A. That he scattered in the world religious truths.
Q. Did he use another figure?
A. Yes, I am the light of the world.
Q. What did he mean?
A. My life and works shall shine for all.

Another Explanation.

This explains the fact that churches are the results, and not the causes of Christianity. They are necessary, but they do not come first. Jesus did not create any churches. Saint Paul did, after Jesus had passed away.

Churches.

So in this way we can show loyalty to our leader by supporting a church. Because by combining we make the spirit and aim of Jesus stronger. "Together" is a noble watchword. You can be a "disciple" alone, but you can be a better one in company with others who are striving for the same things.

Church Universal.

These lines express very well the idea of the great discipleship, the membership of the world-wide church:

One holy church of God appears
Through every age and race,
Unwasted by the lapse of years,
Unchanged by changing place.

Samuel Longfellow.

The Test.

One remarkable incident recorded in Mark, the third chapter, reveals the real test of a follower. Jesus was preaching to a crowd; and a man hurried up to him, saying, "Your mother and some of your family are seeking you." Jesus replied, "Whosoever does the will of God, is my brother and sister and mother."

Why?

If we are asked, Why is Jesus your Leader? we can answer:
Because he is the greatest religious teacher.
Because he is the greatest religious prophet.
Because he is the greatest religious guide.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

If you make clear the spirit and aim of Jesus, the lesson of leadership and following will be evident. Many understand by "following" a blind imitation. Show the truth. Prove that the spirit and aim of Jesus make for freedom of thought, progress, manliness, and real individual power.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. Where do we best find what Jesus said? 2. Have his words been misunderstood? 3. Can we judge by a part? 4. How do we "follow" Jesus? 5. Can we do just as he did? 6. Why? 7. What do we mean by the "spirit of Jesus"? 8. What, by the "aim of Jesus"? 9. In what two ways did Jesus describe himself? 10. Why support a church? 11. Can you give the three reasons for acknowledging the leadership of Jesus?

LESSON THIRTEEN.

I. THE TALK.

We have reached the fourth point: —

Salvation by Character.

In using this word "salvation," we must be sure and start right. Why do we talk about being saved? What are we to be saved from?

There must be dangers of some kind, that are before us all. Firemen save persons from burning houses. Doctors save patients from death. Life-preservers are made to save from drowning. Now what does religion save from, and how is it done? And, first, what are the dangers?

Two Kinds.

When we read history, we find there have always been two kinds of dangers, one of this world, and one of the world beyond. That is the way men have looked at the subject.

The Strong Life.

In order to escape the dangers of this world, men have tried to live the strong life; and they meant by that the good life. Because it was good, it was strong.

Why Strong?

Because a good life obeys God's laws, and he who is obedient to God's will is one with the power of the universe. The good man does not escape dangers of sickness, accident, and age; but he is free from punishments and sufferings that attend wickedness.

The Other World:

Then we find there has been a wonder and fear about the other world. Great questions came up. What ought to be done to make one's self ready for the next life? How would God judge the soul? What was the best way to prepare for death?

Character.

The wisest men have believed that the same way of escaping the evils and dangers of this world was the best way for securing acceptance in the life to come. And that is what we believe. So we say, Salvation by character, here and everywhere; now and at all times.

What is it?

But some one may ask us, What do you mean by "character"? And we reply, It is the whole result of our thinking and doing. It is what we really are, not simply what we say we are, or what we say we believe.

Q. Suppose I say, "Character by salvation"?

A. That is the same thing with a different emphasis.

Q. Why do you prefer the former?

A. Because it is the Jesus way, which is the truer way.

Q. What do you more fully mean?

A. To be saved, you must have Christian character: therefore, put the emphasis on character; the cause before the effect.

Salvation.

You see the argument: We can use this fourth point either way, Savation by character or Character by salvation; but the first is far the better. Why? Because there are many strange ideas about "salvation." It means to some an escape from an angry God; to others, a reliance on the goodness of another; to others, a profession of faith; to others, sacrifices and forms of worship; to others, acceptance of a scheme of theology.

The True Idea.

In our belief we think of "salvation" as rescue from evil and obedience to right, love of the good and hostility to the bad, and that salvation comes through God's help, by many ways, but greatly in the leadership of Jesus. Our own efforts joined with help divine makes salvation, makes character, makes the soul victorious in life and death. In that sense salvation is character. Just as surely and more accurately we can say character is salvation.

Our Duty.

Salvation by character is not easy. We are kept on guard all the time. We are warned not to believe in "good works" alone. We are obliged to look beyond, to help and light higher than ourselves. On the other hand, we are cautioned against lip-service, and substitute merit. Our lives must have faith and works combined. "By their fruits ye shall know them."

Morality Alone?

No! Not morality alone.

Q. What do we mean by "being good"?

A. A life of two elements,—religious faith and moral purpose.

Q. Can the Golden Rule exist of itself?

A. No! It must have a spiritual inspiration.

Q. What is meant by "spiritual inspiration"?

A. The sanctions and power of religious sentiments.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

"Character-Building," a manual published by the Unitarian Sunday-School Society, may prove helpful. But life, biography, are full of aids. Your object must be, in this lesson, to deal justly with both sides of the question, leaving the emphasis on character. We do not make ourselves. Yet we are in a measure responsible. Religion *and* morality, God *and* man, ideals *and* practice,— united produce character.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. Are there dangers in this world? 2. Are there any in the world beyond? 3. How can we escape them? 4. What do we mean by "the strong life"? 5. What is character? 6. What is salvation? 7. How do they depend on each other? 8. Which do you call the cause, and which the effect? 9. What two things must be combined to make character? 10. Can you tell the meaning of "spiritual inspiration"?

LESSON FOURTEEN.

I. THE TALK.

When we search the Bible to learn its teachings about salvation, we find in the Old Testament stories and records of ancient habits. They belonged to the times when religion was not free from idolatry.

Sacrifices.

In order to please Jehovah, the people offered sacrifices of animals: sometimes they did not spare human lives. By such means, worshippers hoped to secure the favor and protection of God.

Many Gods.

There were those, also, who believed in more gods than one. These gods were always fighting, and the object of worship was to get the good-will of the strongest. All these ideas belonged to the early times of the world. But in savage nations the superstition remains.

Forms and Prayers.

Another way to salvation was by repeating prayers and by going through forms. To keep safe and well, men wore charms and observed certain customs. This way is still pursued by many.

The Prophets.

Q. Did superstition go unrebuked?

A. No. Among the Jews the prophets rose to protest.

Q. Who were they?

A. The greatest were Isaiah, Jeremiah, Amos, Micah.

Q. Did Moses teach the true view of salvation?

A. Yes. He taught the religion of character and the holy life.

Q. What did Micah say?

A. "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; to do justly, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God."

Jesus.

The prophets and best teachers in the Old Testament stood for salvation by character: they denied the claim that costly sacrifices could take the place of goodness and holiness. Now, if we search the New Testament, we see Jesus rebuking the other evil,—the idea that forms and prayers can be substituted for character.

Plain Speech.

The rulers and priests grew angry because Jesus spoke so plainly. He called some of them "whited sepulchres." He used the word "hypocrites." He declared they were the blind leading the blind.

Jesus denounced these false leaders because they were making religion hollow and teaching the worst kind of doctrine. They were encouraging the people to believe that salvation could be secured by something else than character.

Its Meaning.

Character means reality.
Character stands for sincerity.
Character represents conscience.
Character has deep faith roots.
Character grows toward an ideal.

Isaiah.

Jesus often quoted from the sayings of the prophet Isaiah when rebuking the people. Once he exclaimed:

Well said Isaiah when he foretold such as you, in the words:

"This is a people that honors God with their lips, while their hearts are far removed from Him. But vainly do they worship Him, for their teaching is only the commands of men."

Then he added, You neglect God's commandments, and cling to the traditions of men.

Everywhere.

All through the teaching of Jesus is this condemnation of the belief in salvation by habits, or external forms. He even says that at some future day many will come and say, "Lord, I did miracles in thy name." But they will be rejected, because their spirit and aim were not those of their Master.

By the Well.

One great saying of Jesus stands out, uttered at the well in Samaria: "God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship spiritually, with true insight." Forms, prayers, habits, may help worship; but they are not worship itself.

Right Understanding.

With this knowledge of what the prophets and Jesus taught, we can understand correctly certain phrases.

"Saved by faith" means made strong by faith in the right life, and daily striving to realize it, God helping.

"Reconciled to God" means put into right relations of knowledge and obedience, knowing His laws, and obeying them.

"Conversion" means turning about from the wrong path and going the right way, leading the right life.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Here is a good opportunity to prove that the Bible is a record of religious development in the nation and the individual. Through superstition and idolatry shines the light of the prophets and of Jesus. The spiritual truths of the New Testament gather around the growing idea that reality and righteousness make genuine religion. The Old Testament said "righteousness," the New Testament says "righteousness and mercy." (Read Emerson's essays, "Character" and "Spiritual Laws.")

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. Can you give the principal idea of the preceding lesson? 2. What is our object in this one? 3. How did the ancients try to get salvation? 4. Who rebuked them? 5. What was a prophet? 6. Against what evil did Jesus speak? 7. What did he once quote from Isaiah? 8. What did he say by the well at Samaria? 9. For what does character stand? 10. Can you explain the terms "saved by faith," "conversion," and "reconciled to God"?

LESSON FIFTEEN.

How happy is he born or taught
Who serveth not another's will;
Whose armor is his honest thought,
And simple truth his highest skill.

Sir Henry Wotton.

I. THE TALK.

We conclude in this lesson our consideration of the subject, Salvation by Character.

By looking into history and by examining the Bible, we have learned certain things.

Salvation.

Salvation means safety, strength, happiness. It means right relations. It means peace of mind and power of soul.

Character.

Character means completeness, righteousness, faith in God, and faith in man. It means conviction and conscience. It means worship and work.

The Way of Jesus.

Jesus taught The Way. Walk in it and you will be saved, he said. That Way was none other than the one we have described,— The Way of Holiness.

Holiness.

Holiness is whole-ness, and whole-ness is character. Of course, no one is perfect, said Jesus, no one is whole; but we are to strive for completer characters, and walk in The Way.

Purpose.

We are not saved — that is, we are not acceptable in the sight of God — because of what we do alone. Our works are sadly short of what we ought to do. But the purpose redeems us. We are estimated by our best efforts, though those efforts may often fail.

Completing.

I prefer the word "completing," or finishing, rather than "salvation." It is true we need to be saved from many dangers, but our greatest need is to grow.

We are incomplete, half-built, not fulfilled. Saint Paul preferred the word "completion," for he urged them of old to grow up into the full stature and strength of the children of God.

Growth.

Q. What is man?
A. A growing soul.
Q. What does he need?
A. Knowledge and enthusiasm.
Q. Is knowledge enough?
A. No! We must add a love for God and man.
Q. What is "completion"?
A. Constantly coming nearer to an ideal.
Q. What is the ideal of human character?
A. The example of Jesus, his spirit and aim.

Helps.

There are many helps to character-making. While forms cannot take the place of religion, they assist. It is not right to say we will not go to church, we will not recite Scripture, we will not say we believe things, because some persons do all this in a wrong way.

Examples.

The study of biography is a help. Great lives remind us we can aspire and achieve. Read the records of noble men and women who were true to themselves and true to their Maker.

Facing Forward.

Always face forward. Look for more light. Never give up. Expect to grow and to ascend. "We are saved by hope," said an apostle. As long as you live, keep moving forward. Be true to the old, and be ready for the new.

Tastes.

We grow by our tastes. We are saved by what we like. These lines are worthy of memorizing:

To live for common ends is to be common.
The highest faith makes still the highest man;
For we grow like the things our souls believe,
We are in very truth that which we love.

Punishment.

I have not said anything about punishments. What are they? The penalties paid for breaking laws.

Q. What are God's punishments?
A. Intended to educate and help.
Q. Do they come because of anger?
A. God is never angry.
Q. Does He forgive?
A. He is always forgiving, and changes not.
Q. What does He demand of us?
A. That we obey His commandments as fast as we know them.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

In a sense this lesson gathers up the two previous ones. Bring out clearly the mutual relations of salvation and character. Show the fallacy of substitution religion, whether as sacrifice, charms, forms, or schemes of theology. But do not end with negative results: leave the positive impression last,— the greatness and glory of completed Christian character as title to "salvation."

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What does "salvation" mean? 2. What does "character" mean? 3. What is meant by "The Way"? 4. Can you give another word for "holiness"? 5. What really "saves" any one? 6. How does the word "completion" bear on our subject? 7. What is our ideal? 8. What are helps to character-growing? 9. Will you explain the meaning of "punishments"? 10. How do our tastes affect us? 11. Is God ever angry? 12. What is obedience? 13. What is forgiveness?

LESSON SIXTEEN.

As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.—SAINT PAUL.

I. THE TALK.

On our steady course we have reached the final, the fifth point of our belief:

Progress of Mankind Onward and Upward Forever.

Following our habit, let us first look backward to see what was thought about the future life in old times, the long ago of history.

Something.

We find, even among savages, something of a belief in immortality. But the hope was very dim, and not spiritual.

Some believed that life was greatly the same in the future. The warriors fought and led the tribes to battle. The Indian buried his friend with bow and arrows by his side,— a sign that something would be needed of that kind after death.

Egyptians.

The people of old Egypt believed in a judgment day. There was nothing cheerful in the future, as we consider cheerfulness. Just where and how souls were to live never seemed clear. The body having served the soul so well was thought worthy of embalming.

Greeks and Romans.

These ancients talked about the Elysian Fields, where spring and joyous days were the portion of the blest. Suffering and darkness attended the wicked. But there was no progress. They seemed to believe in spirits and oracles and a world of supernatural beings. The body, having finished its service at death, was often burned, and the ashes put into an urn,— our modern cremation.

Norsemen.

Those sturdy men of Iceland and Scandinavia had religious customs that recognized a future life. We have their poems and records paying honors to heroes and rulers who continued to be famous in gorgeous halls and lordly palaces beyond the grave. What became of the people, the human beings who were not great and famous, very little is told us that we can understand.

Q. What was one old custom?
A. The honoring of ancestors, parents.
Q. Where do we find this now?
A. In China.
Q. What does it really mean?
A. Gratitude to the departed, wherever they may be.
Q. Does this show belief in immortality?
A. Only indirectly, as a possibility.

To-day.

All of these beliefs, and many others we cannot mention, exist to-day, somewhere in the world. And in all ages, even to this time, men have thought about death, and wondered what it meant. Does it put out our life, like blowing out a lighted candle?

Two Views.

We can see, running through the ages, a dividing line. Some have always believed that what we call death is a blessing, a part of divine goodness. Others have always believed that it represented God's punishment of man for his sins. Here is a great difference.

Q. What do we further find, looking backward?
A. A view of this life as probation.
Q. What does that mean?
A. One test life for man, and then judgment.
Q. What else was taught as true?
A. Two places hereafter, one for the good, one for the bad.

The New.

By the light of Christianity and from the teachings of later times we have come to new truth:

This life joins the next life.
The next life continues this life.
All life is progressive.
Death is not a crisis, but a change.
Judgment days are every day.

Many Worlds.

In olden times it was thought our world was the only one. The sun, moon, and stars existed merely to light the earth. Even our own globe was little known; and one tribe, or nation, thought itself to be the only important one.

Enlarged.

We have now a great thought. Thousands of worlds are discovered by the telescope. Human beings, all over the earth, are seen to be of one family. God is educating His children. As He has made a place for us here He will make a place for us elsewhere. We do not think now so much of heaven as a particular spot.

The following lines fitly end our conversation at this time:

We cannot think of them as dead
Who walk with us no more;
Along the path of life we tread
They have but gone before.
The Father's house is mansioned fair
Beyond our vision dim:
All souls are His, and, here or there,
Are living unto Him.

F. L. Hosmer.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

The wise use of material relating to ancient customs and beliefs will prove interesting to the class. See Gould's "Beginnings," chapter on *Immortality*. Lubbock's "Prehistoric Times" is suggestive. Alger's "History of the Doctrine of the Future Life" is the great storehouse of facts.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What is the quotation from Paul? 2. Has some kind of belief in immortality always existed? 3. How have savages expressed it? 4. How the Egyptians? 5. How the Greeks? 6. What is the prevailing custom in China? 7. What two views of death have always existed? 8. Can you explain the saying, "This life is a probation"? 9. What is the "new view"? 10. How have we learned the new and better truth?

LESSON SEVENTEEN.

Alas for him who never sees
The stars shine through his cypress trees!

For Life is ever Lord of Death,
And Love can never lose its own.

Whittier.

I. THE TALK.

We must turn to the New Testament for Bible light on the subject of life after death, not to the Old.

Little Argument.

Jesus rarely enters into any arguments with those who put questions to him on this subject. Once he replied at some length to the Sadducees, who did not believe in immortality, and ended thus:

"As to the dead, and the fact that they rise from the grave, have you never read in the Book of Moses, in the passage about the Bush, how God spoke to him thus: I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob. God is is not God of dead, but of living people. You are greatly mistaken."

The Father's House.

In another conversation, this time with his disciples, Jesus uttered these words:

"Believe in God, and believe in me, too. In my Father's house there are many rooms. I am going to prepare a place for you."

His Last Words.

The last words Jesus spoke revealed his thought of the future:

"Jesus called out loudly, 'Father, into Thy hands I commit my spirit.' And with these words he expired."

Other Sayings.

But we are not left to these for our only light and information. Under all that Jesus taught, and through the life he lived, ran the faith in immortality that shows itself in three ways.

Life Everlasting.

The Great Teacher was always pointing out the way that led to life everlasting. Enter in by the narrow gate; strive and falter not; seek the pearl of great price; keep the lamp filled with oil.

These and other similar teachings referred to the strong life, the good life, which was the everlasting life. Death could not destroy it.

The Eternal Life.

Jesus also exhorted men to be sure and obtain part in the life eternal. He did not mean by this that men should prepare and wait for some great thing to come to pass. Eternity is now and here. Eternity is God, and God is here and now. He who is

"accepted of God" is already living the eternal life. It is not true or good to say, "Prepare for eternity," as though that meant some far-off time and place.

The Victorious Life.

And the third way Jesus taught immortality, or enforced its reality, was by calling on all to live the victorious life.

Jesus sought to stir the sense of sonship to God in every heart, to make it strong, so that confidence would take the place of timidity.

"Even now," said an apostle, "we are children of God, and, if children, then heirs," — heirs of the gift of life everlasting, given to us by our heavenly Father.

Q. Did Jesus often speak in figures?

A. Most of his teachings are in parables, or pictorial form.

Q. How ought we to read them?

A. Always remembering to separate the idea from the imagery.

Q. Is this specially true of everything he said about the future life?

A. Yes. Great harm has been done by failing to follow this rule.

Q. Can we think of any particular cases?

A. Yes. About the resurrection and about heaven and hell.

Q. What has happened in these instances?

A. His allegorical, pictorial language has been taken literally.

Q. What has been the result?

A. The spiritual idea has been lost in the material description.

Onward.

We believe that every soul goes onward at death, but it may not go at once upward. It may undergo discipline for a while. Some souls are better prepared than others. It will not be the same to all, without regard to conduct and character.

Upward.

This means that the good, the noble, the honorable, are the spiritually-minded.

That he who loves the low and mean checks and hinders his progress here and hereafter: he is earthly-minded.

Such are the teachings of Jesus and of the writers in the New Testament.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

You will do well to elaborate what is only suggested in the lesson, and illustrate how Jesus spoke in metaphors, in poetic, pictorial language. It was Oriental; it was simple and graphic; it was understood correctly at the time. But in after times the idea became confused with the setting, and the frame was of more consequence than the picture. Jesus said little definitely about the future; but his faith in that future was evident in all he said and did.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. Where do we look for light on this subject in the Bible? 2. Did Jesus enter into argument about immortality? 3. Why? 4. How did he once describe the future? 5. What were his last words? 6. Can you explain the phrase "life everlasting"? 7. "Eternal life"? 8. "Victorious life"? 9. Did Jesus often use figures of speech in referring to the future? 10. How do careless readers make mistakes? 11. Do we believe that all souls go onward and upward alike? 12. Why not?

LESSON EIGHTEEN.

When falls the night upon the earth,
And all in shadow lies,
The sun's not dead, his radiance still
Beams bright on other skies.

Minot J. Savage.

I. THE TALK.

Q. What have we ascertained?

A. That some kind of hope or faith in future life has always existed.

Q. Was it clear and strong?

A. No. It varied with the age and civilization of the peoples.

Q. What light did Jesus bring?

A. He taught a faith in everlasting life.

Q. How did that help?

A. By showing that he who has the true life now has proof of future life.

If.

Now let us see the consequences. If we believe in the progress of mankind onward and upward forever, then there are certain things we must keep in mind.

Prepare to Live.

The most important duty is to be ready to live, day by day. Sometimes we think our duty is to prepare for death, because that event seems so strange and solemn. But he who fills each day nobly will meet death triumphantly.

Living Nobly.

Living day by day does not mean a careless, ordinary way. We must make the most of our time, follow the highest examples, do good, and leave the world better. We must listen to conscience, and obey the truth as we see it.

Dignity.

Another thing to be remembered: If we are to live hereafter, then the present takes on more dignity and greatness. It is true, this is God's world, and therefore sacred and noble; but, when we think of other worlds and continued life, we look out over a grander existence.

Large.

A plan that is made for a day only is not so large as a plan made for a week, while a plan for a week is smaller than a year's. At the thought of immortality we see endless opportunity, perpetual growth, that gives courage and strength. But, further, we lay our plans large for some results no few years can compass.

Progress.

What does progress mean? We may expect to know more. Many mysterious things will be made clear. Is there anything greater than going on and on, learning, enjoying more and more? Sometimes we have thought of heaven as a place where good people did nothing. Would you not tire of that?

New Opportunities.

We believe there will be new opportunities for those who have failed here, but who had noble aims. Circumstances are not our masters, but they have great power. We must not be hasty to judge. Some will go up higher, who failed, judged by the world's tests: others will go lower, who were praised by men. God knoweth all.

Q. What now are the reasons for believing in the future life?

A. That mankind has desired it.

Q. Another.

A. That it completes the present life.

Q. Have we a third reason?

A. We cannot think of the soul as dead.

Q. Is this all?

A. No. It is true to our highest conception of God and His justice.

Q. Still more?

A. Jesus, the greatest religious teacher, enforces the belief.

Other Arguments.

There are other reasons; but they are not easily treated in talks of this kind, so I omit them. Therefore, I come back to our first thought: If these reasons make our faith stronger, then we ought to be happy and brave. A wise man of old — Socrates — said,—

"Be of good cheer about death, and know this of a truth, that no evil can happen to a good man either in life or after death."

A greater than Socrates gave us the Beatitude: Happy are those that have been persecuted in the cause of Right, for it is to them that the kingdom of heaven belongs.

The Eternal Goodness is our source of trust. We will go forward hopefully.

I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air;
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care.

Whittier.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

Actual life, the life of to-day, interests the young. But this thought of a future life must be unfolded early, and taught in reasonable views. Not doing this, we run great risks of errors creeping in as life matures. Christianity did not create the idea of immortality, neither did it make clear the place where souls dwell in the next world. But Jesus deepened the reasonable faith in personal life hereafter, and asked us to trust the Eternal Goodness for the rest. Impress this in all ways.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What is meant by the poetry quoted from Mr. Savage? 2. How does a tree bear leaves and fruit? 3. How does it survive the winter's cold? 4. How does this figure apply to our subject? 5. What is everlasting or enduring life? 6. What is the best preparation for death? 7. How do you define "living nobly"? 8. How does the thought of another life affect our thought of this one? 9. What is meant by "progress"? 10. Can you give some of the reasons for believing in our "fifth point"?

LESSON NINETEEN.

I. THE TALK.

We have now finished our talks on the five points. Let us add one on some things that follow. What are we intending to do with Our Faith?

A. We will make it grow.
Q. What do you mean by that?
A. Apply it, enlarge it, enrich it.
Q. How can this be done?
A. By keeping the mind open.
Q. Ought we to welcome new truth?
A. Always.
Q. Is there any danger?
A. There is danger in refusing to listen to new truth.

Three Ways.

There are three ways of using a Faith, three ways of applying our religious belief.

First, by making it strengthen and develop our characters.

Second, by using it to organize a church and to create a denomination.

Third, by putting it forth, with others, as a grand missionary cause, a gospel of "good news" to the world.

Q. Are there any dangers in this?
A. Yes. And we must be careful.
Q. What are some things to be avoided?
A. Bigotry and persecution.
Q. Can we be zealous for our faith and remain broad?
A. Certainly.
Q. Is it narrow to be in earnest?
A. No. Some narrow minds are never enthusiastic.

Universal Church.

We often hear of a church universal. But that does not mean one church, one form of worship, for all. It means a unity of spirit and aim,—the spirit and aim of Jesus, with different churches.

Q. How did Saint Paul speak of this?
A. Different "administrations," different forms, but the same spirit.
Q. What is meant by the "same spirit"?
A. Love to God, service for man, discipleship of Jesus.

Unity in Variety.

If all persons accepted Our Faith, they would not necessarily think just alike or have the same church. This belief we have studied allows for variety of application and unfolding. That is one deep reason why we think it will spread and become powerful.

Two.

There are two words we must always remember, and keep in mind what they stand for in religion.

Q. What is the first?

A. Reason.
Q. The second?
A. Reverence.
Q. How does the first help us?
A. By showing us the truth.
Q. What does the second stand for?
A. Reverence is love and admiration for truth.

Together.

They work together. Reason gives us the truth, and reverence impels us to be obedient to the truth.

Q. But is reason opposed to faith?
A. No. Without reason we could not have faith.
Q. Is faith greater than reason?
A. Yes. Because we believe on and beyond what we know and prove.
Q. What is faith without reason?
A. Superstition.
Q. What is reason without faith?
A. Half-developed character.
Q. Could the world go on a day without faith?
A. No.

Going Forward.

As we go forward, loyal and zealous to Our Faith, how can we come into union with others and prove that we are truly "liberal"? Perhaps Rev. W. C. Gannett's four tests will do:

1. Freedom of reason and freedom of conscience.
2. Fellowship, the Spirit.
3. Service, the Aim.
4. Character, the Test.

Vaster.

There is a stanza by Tennyson that tells us well how we ought to use Our Faith:

Let knowledge grow from more to more,
But more of reverence in us dwell;
That mind and soul, according well,
May make one music as before,— but vaster.

II. HINTS TO TEACHERS.

You can do an important service to the pupils, if you enforce the idea of this lesson. The right use and the full use of a statement of belief is yet to be understood by Christians. It must be made a source of progress in thought, of guidance in conduct, of joy in life, of fellowship in religion. "Creeds" and doctrines have been used in just the opposite ways. Let us prove to the world that our young people can learn a "faith," love it, and stand by it, with liberty of mind and breadth of view.

III. QUESTIONS FOR PUPILS.

1. What must we do with Our Faith? 2. How do you explain it? 3. Ought we to welcome new truth? 4. What are the three ways of using Our Faith? 5. What two evils ought we to avoid? 6. What do we mean by "the universal church"? 7. What two words should we remember? 8. Can you mention Mr. Gannett's four tests of a "liberal"? 9. Can you repeat the lines from Tennyson? 10. Will you explain their exact meaning?

LESSON TWENTY.

A Summary and Review.

We have reached the end of our talks. It seems to me fitting to give one more treasure into the keeping of memory. At the beginning we learned Mr. Mott's "Therefore." Now, as a summing-up, as a review, let us get well acquainted with Mrs. Clara Bancroft Beatley's valuable

Exposition of Our Faith.

I. *The Fatherhood of God.*

By the Fatherhood of God, we mean that God is a Father and that all are His children. God is more loving than the best father we know, or can in any way dream of. As children trust their earthly parents, so we trust the Father in heaven.

If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father in heaven give good things to them that ask Him?

Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done, as in heaven so on earth.

II. *The Brotherhood of Man.*

By the Brotherhood of Man, we mean that all are members of one family, and so are brothers and sisters. Our lives are happiest when we recognize this bond of Brotherhood.

Therefore let us lay aside bitterness, and wrath, and evil-speaking, and be kind to one another, forgiving one another.

If God so loved us, we ought also to love one another.

O Brother-man, fold to thy heart thy Brother!
Where pity dwells, the peace of God is there;
To worship rightly is to love each other,
Each smile, a hymn; each kindly deed, a prayer!

III. *The Leadership of Jesus.*

By the Leadership of Jesus, we mean that we believe that Jesus has shown *the way of life* beyond all other teachers. He has taught us that God is our Father, and man our Brother; and that heaven is within the heart. He has given us the Golden Rule of life, and has taught us the prayer that has never grown old. We accept him as our Leader, and would walk in his path.

Where'er we walk, our Shepherd goes before.

I am come, that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

O Lord and Master of us all,
Whate'er our name or sign,
We own thy sway, we hear thy call,
We test our lives by thine.

We faintly hear, we dimly see,
In differing phrase we pray,
But dim or clear, we own in thee
The light, the truth, the way.

IV. *Salvation by Character.*

By Salvation by Character, we mean that the highest peace and joy can only come as we follow the right, forget self, and grow more and more toward perfection. We may have fine ideas of right, and recite Our Faith every Sunday, but only as we *live* the right, do we follow the Leadership of Jesus, and find the peace and joy of the Heavenly Kingdom.

Not every one that saith unto me, "Lord, Lord," shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in Heaven.

Behold the Kingdom of Heaven is within you.

To be saved is only this, salvation from our selfishness.

Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles?

The fruits of the spirit are love, joy, peace!

The tissues of the life to be
We weave with colors all our own;
And in the field of Destiny
We reap as we have sown.

V. *The Progress of Mankind, onward and upward forever.*

By the Progress of Mankind, onward and upward forever, we mean that we were made to grow toward God, the Father of our spirits. There is no end to this growth. We have the hope of growing wiser and better as long as we live in this world, and of finding new opportunities of growth in the heavenly life to come.

Build thee more stately mansions, O my soul,
As the swift seasons roll!
Leave thy low-vaulted past!
Let each new temple, nobler than the last,
Shut thee from heaven with a dome more vast,
Till thou at length art free!
Leaving thine outgrown shell by life's unresting sea.

In love to God and love to man
Our simple creed finds ample scope;
Secure in God's unerring plan,
We walk by faith, are saved by hope.

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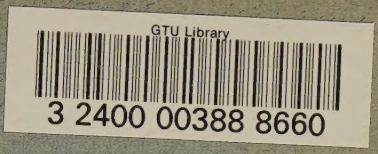

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